

Connections

November 2007

Missouri Adopt-A-Highway Celebrates 20 Years

This fall, Adopt-A-Highway in Missouri celebrates its 20th anniversary. The traditional gift for a 20th anniversary is china; but Missouri's Adopt-A-Highway program would settle for everyone putting their fast food containers and other waste in trash cans.



First Lady Melanie Blunt, right, pays tribute to members of Viva Cuba, Missouri's first Adopt-A-Highway volunteer group. She also recognized other 1987 charter adopters and groups who have adopted highways in the last 20 years. A reception was held in their honor Oct. 19 in Jefferson City.

"The Adopt-A-Highway program is a huge asset to Missouri," says MoDOT Director Pete Rahn. "Besides making our state a cleaner, more beautiful place to live and

visit, adopters perform about \$1 million a year in litter cleanup and beautification efforts."

In addition to seeking more volunteers to clean up Missouri's highways, MoDOT is also celebrating the anniversary by offering a new adoption option. Adopters can now adopt portions of highways solely to plant native wildflowers on the roadsides.

"Our goal with this new option is to not only focus on cleaning up the roadsides, but to make them more beautiful as well," said Stacy Armstrong, statewide Adopt-A-Highway coordinator. "Other adopters have planted flowers before, but this way we can recognize them just for these efforts and hopefully see more of them."

Texas created the first Adopt-A-Highway program in 1985. MoDOT staff heard about Texas' innovative program to keep roadsides clean, and Missouri became one of the next states to create its own program by the fall of 1987, expanding it to include beautification and mowing. Today,

Adopt-A-Highway has become an international program with volunteers active in 49 states, as well as Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Puerto Rico.

Missouri's first volunteer group, Viva Cuba, adopted a section of Route 19 in September 1987. The program has come a long way. Now there are more than 3,772 adopters, who pick up litter on more than 5,281 miles of roadsides across the state.

"The program itself is amazing - it receives no federal dollars, has no national administration or leaders, and each state sets its own rules and policies," Rahn said. "With more than one million members nationwide, Adopt-A-Highway is a powerful force with positive results."



Over the years, many more businesses, individuals and community groups have adopted to help clean up Missouri. Of the original 1987 adopters, there are four groups that are still in the program today: Viva Cuba, Inc., Kiwanis Club of Mountain Grove, the city of North Kansas City, and the W.E. Sears Youth Center in Poplar Bluff.

Continued on page 2

Missouri Program Honors Veterans From Three Wars

by Matt Hiebert

Veterans Day sets aside a special time to honor the men and women who served – or even died for – our nation. Dozens of MoDOT employees began their public service careers in the military and this Nov. 11 we should all be thankful for their sense of duty.

In the spirit of this tradition, the Missouri Legislature established the Veteran's Award Program in 2000 to recognize the

service and sacrifices of Missouri veterans. The program offers qualified veterans a medal, medallion and certificate to honor their active duty service in World War II, Korea or Vietnam.

To learn more about the Veteran's Award Program or to download applications for the award, visit www.moguard.com/ww2awards/MONG.ww2awards.asp.

MoDOT in Running for Missouri Quality Award

by Sally Oxenhandler

As you read this, we may already have received the Missouri Quality Award given each year by the Excellence in Missouri Foundation. If not, we're gearing up to go after it again next year.

The Missouri Quality Award, modeled after the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, is the official state recognition for excellence in quality leadership. Seven award examiners - business professionals who volunteer their time to review organizations that have applied for the award - conducted site visits at MoDOT from Sept. 17 to Sept. 19. They canvassed Central Office and the districts in person, by telephone and via videocon-

ference. The results were due at the end of October.

During the site visits, the examiners measured us on how well we perform in seven categories: leadership; strategic planning; customer focus; measurement, analysis

"Quality is not an act; it is a habit."
Aristotle

and knowledge; workforce focus; process management; and results. The site visits verify the information we submitted in our award application in May, said Mara Campbell, Organizational Results director. "The site visits gave us a chance to show

Continued on page 16

Inside

6



Out with the Old

District 1 unleashes destruction on defective child safety seats

7



A Hair Razing Experience

A District 2 manager loses his hair for a good cause

10



Safety First

District 5's Area Engineer shares safety with a group of first graders

12



Packed with Love

District 7 employees prepare care packages for co-worker serving in Iraq

14



Round 'em Up

Winter Skills Rodeo participants in District 9 earn high scores

MoDOT Recognized for National Safety Leadership

Missouri recently received a national safety leadership award for “Driving Down Fatalities” from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Missouri had the largest drop in traffic-related fatalities in 2006 of any state in the nation – down by 161 compared to 2005.

Director Pete Rahn credited the entire Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety and all its partners for their ongoing efforts to educate, enforce and engineer the best traffic safety solutions for the state.

“It was an honor to accept this award from AASHTO, but improving safety on our roads has definitely been a joint effort,” said Rahn. “While we have made significant system improvements to increase safety, much of our success has resulted from the tremendous efforts of our partners – the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety, which includes law enforcement agencies, and several other federal, state and local groups. And that’s what it’s all about ... working together to save lives.”

Rahn Elected AASHTO President

MoDOT Director Pete Rahn was elected president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials at the organization’s annual conference in Milwaukee, Wis. on Oct. 1.

His leadership comes at a pivotal time as the nation looks at options for addressing deteriorating bridges and making highways safer and less congested, all while facing a national transportation funding crisis. In this post, Rahn will focus on three key elements regarding the future of the nation’s



transportation system: investment, accountability and safety.

AASHTO represents the highway and transportation departments in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico on national issues relating to all modes of transportation.

Five Things You Can Tell Your Neighbors About Safe & Sound

by Bob Brendel

With recent concerns about the condition of the nation’s bridge infrastructure, the Safe & Sound Bridge Improvement Plan has been thrust into the national spotlight and is even being touted as an innovative idea that may become a national model.

- 2 | Don’t be surprised if your friends and neighbors ask you about it. If they do, here are five facts you can share:
1. Safe & Sound is being developed as a 30-year design-build-finance-maintain contract that will improve 802 bridges statewide under one contract. All of the bridges would have to be improved by Dec. 31, 2012 and then maintained in good condition for at least 25 years, at which point MoDOT would reassume maintenance responsibility.
 2. Most of the 802 bridges in Safe & Sound are structurally deficient and represent most of the approximately 1,100 structurally deficient bridges on the Missouri state system. The majority of the bridges are also small- to medium-sized bridges in rural areas.
 3. Safe & Sound was designed to spur innovation from the proposers. They have complete flexibility in deter-

- mining whether the individual bridge improvements will be rehabilitations or replacements and how they will be designed and constructed. The unsuccessful proposer will be paid a \$2 million stipend so that MoDOT will be allowed to incorporate their good ideas into the final contract awarded to the best-value proposer.
4. Technical proposals are due from the two competing teams on Oct. 25, with the cost portions of the proposals being due Nov. 5. MoDOT will then determine if the proposals are responsive and affordable. If awarded, MoDOT intends to use FHWA’s Highway Bridge Program funds as the primary funding source for making payments for the next 25 years following the completion of the project.
5. MoDOT has also received approval from the U.S. DOT for the successful proposer to use up to \$700 million in Private Activity Bonds as the primary financing source for the initial improvement phase. The tax-free nature of these bonds has the potential to save over \$70 million on the project.

Online Application is Easy to Use and Saves Time

by Javal Burton

In March, Central Office-Human Resources implemented the option for job applicants to submit applications online. This new feature allows applicants to apply for advertised positions directly and update their information at any time.

The online application database is very secure. It is protected by Secure Sockets Layer encryption. Once applicants complete an online application, they receive a confirmation number and can update and revise their application by using this number or their nine-digit social security number along with their first and last name.

“I love the online applications, and I wish more individuals would use them,” said Sandra Brooks, Human Resources specialist in District 10. “We spend a great deal of time entering applications in the computer, and now that we have the online applications, not only can applicants come in to the office and complete the application online, but they can also do it from the comforts of their home. The more individuals that take advantage of the online application, the less paper work to file!”

Another feature of the online application is that users have the ability to attach their resume, transcripts or any other related documents. This is much more efficient and user friendly, because our applicants no longer have to mail in these documents. Since implementing this option, about 8,300



A job seeker fills out an application online at the Career Center in District 10-Sikeston.

online applications have been received, which has drastically expanded the applicant pool.

“The online application is beneficial to the applicants because now, if they do not have access to a personal computer, they do have the opportunity to go into a local employment office, library or come in to a district office where a Kiosk Career Center is available,” said Liz Hussey, senior office assistant in Central Office-Human Resources.

“Before, applicants had to come into the local district offices and complete a paper application or have one mailed to them.”

As MoDOT employees, we are our strongest resource when it comes to recruiting prospective employees. If anyone you know is interested in a job with MoDOT or if someone asks you how to apply, be sure to tell them they can now apply online!

AAH Anniversary

Continued from page 1

- Several milestones have been reached and changes have been made over the 20 years:
- 1987 – Missouri program created.
 - 1991 – The 5,000th adoption was recorded.
 - 1992 – Created Volunteer Appreciation Month for five-year anniversary.
 - 2000 - Design of the sign was changed adding the coreopsis, a flower native to Missouri, and the sign was made blue and yellow to be more visually appealing.
 - 2001 – Program rules were changed to allow people to adopt in memory of a loved one. There are now more than 363 such adoptions.
 - 2002 – Expanded program by partnering with the Missouri Department of Conservation to establish a statewide litter-prevention campaign called, No MOre Trash!
 - 2007 - New option added so adopters can plant native wildflowers on their roadsides.

Over the past two decades, more than 100,000 volunteers have picked up thousands of bags of litter; mowed hundreds of roadside miles; and planted millions of flowers, trees and shrubs. These activities make a significant impact on the appearance of Missouri roadsides even though MoDOT spends \$18.5 million a year mowing and another \$5.8 million picking up litter.

“Although we have many active groups in our program, we’re always looking for new adopters,” Rahn said. “I challenge Missourians to double the current number of adopted miles and make Missouri a cleaner, more beautiful state.” MoDOT is responsible for maintaining 385,000 acres of right of way along 32,000 highway miles.

Anyone interested in adopting a highway should call 888-ASK MODOT, or visit MoDOT’s Web site at www.modot.org.

MoDOT Works to “Beet” Mother Nature This Winter

Drivers Should Remember in Ice and Snow, Take It Slow

by Melissa Black

MoDOT is hoping to “beet” Mother Nature this winter and keep the roads clear. But as the department prepares for the upcoming winter weather, crews also remind motorists of a soon-to-be-familiar refrain: in Ice and Snow, Take It Slow.



Liquid geomelt is mixed with salt as it comes off the conveyor. The mixture is kept in salt brine storage tanks.

Besides its tried and true snow removal equipment and materials, the department has been testing an anti-icing product made from sugar beets, called Geomelt. Geomelt is a natural ice-control product that works with road salt to keep ice from forming on the highways. MoDOT has been testing the product in the northwest and Springfield area districts for the past couple of years with success.

“We’re constantly looking for new tools, equipment and materials to keep motorists as safe as possible on Missouri roads during bad weather, while making the best use of our resources,” said

Jim Carney, state Maintenance engineer. “The Geomelt works well when mixed with either rock salt or liquid salt brine to wet the roads before a storm, as well as after snow and ice are already on the roads. We are considering using it more statewide in the future.”

Geomelt is mixed with salt to enable it to work better at lower temperatures, and the mixture is biodegradable, environmentally friendly and less corrosive to the roadways than using salt alone.

“The combination of an inorganic and organic chemical in the solution creates a combination that works better than either would by themselves,” Carney said.

In addition, the Geomelt may save money. Fewer gallons are needed to achieve the same performance as with salt brines alone. That means more lane miles per truckload, improved efficiency and less equipment corrosion. It also means less salt is needed.

Annually MoDOT spends approximately \$30 million on snow and ice removal. Last year, approximately 3,000 dedicated employees spent more than 541,000 hours using the 1,800 snow-removal vehicles, which added up to \$43 million on snow and ice prevention and removal.

MoDOT uses a priority system of routes to determine which roadways are cleared first. The following are priority levels for snow and ice-removal:

- Priority 1: Highest traffic-volume roadways are cleared first, including interstates and other major routes. These roads receive continuous treatment throughout a storm.
- Priority 2: Lower-volume, lettered or numbered routes are opened to two-way traffic and treated with salt at critical areas such as inter-sections, hills and curves.
- Priority 3: After the storm during regular work hours, workers clean up accumulation on shoulders, bridge edges and interchanges.

“Maintenance crews work hard to clear roadways as quickly as possible after a snowfall, and the priority system works to get traffic moving again as smoothly as possible,” Carney said. “Although we work to clear roads fast and make them safe for motorists, it is also the motorist’s job to drive cautiously, pay extra attention to signs and drive defensively.”

As highway maintenance crews prepare for this winter’s snow fight, they will do so with a new slogan “Ice and Snow...Take It Slow.” The catchy phrase was developed by Clear Roads,

Winter Driving Safety Tips

- Slow down for wet, snowy, icy conditions.
- Avoid quick braking or acceleration.
- Find out about driving conditions before you go.
- Every time you travel – Buckle Up.
- Turn signals, brake lights and windows need to be clear of snow.
- You should never use cruise control in winter weather conditions.

a multi-state, pooled fund winter highway maintenance research project, with the help of numerous volunteer public information officers from around the country. The national multimedia winter driving safety campaign will be rolled out this winter.

“Remember to give snowplows plenty of room to work, don’t tailgate and try not to pass,” Carney said. “We want everyone to get home safely. Always buckle up, and remember, when driving in winter, Ice and Snow, Take It Slow.”



Cumulus Photo Archive System Now Open for Business

by Matt Hiebert

If a picture is worth a thousand words, just imagine how many dictionaries it would take to match the thousands of photographs stored in MoDOT’s new online photo archive system.

The archive went live on Oct. 1, giving employees with computer access a library of photographs to use for MoDOT business. Need a picture of a snow plow? Type it in the search bar. Want a picture of a 1950s road crew? Click on “Historic Paving” images and scroll down through the options.

The system is easy to use. Access the Multimedia Services Intranet site at www.intranet/cr/multimedia_services.htm. Choose the Photo Archive link on the left side of the page. You will be prompted for a user name and pass-

word. Use your district (D1, D2, CO, etc.) for the user name and webmodot for the password. Presto! You’re in! Scan through the Photo Archive Help file for instructions on searching the archive and downloading photos.

“This gives employees across the state access to a huge collection of images,” said Mark Baumgartner, Multimedia Service supervisor. “The archives contain pictures of just about anything you can think of.”

If you have any questions or comments about the new MoDOT photo archive, contact Mark Baumgartner at 573-751-2872 or Wes Farris, Multimedia Services technician, at 573-522-5528.

Missouri First in Nation to Test New Security Procedures for Motor Carriers

by DeAnne Bonnot

More than 2,000 of Missouri’s motor carriers learned the latest in security practices, including how to identify threats and vulnerable areas of their operations, during MoDOT’s recent test of a new security project for the Transportation Security Administration.

During the 12-month Corporate Security Review project, MoDOT investigators reviewed motor carriers’ security practices and suggested ways the trucking companies could improve. The department suggested and volunteered to pilot the program, working with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance.

“We found that motor carriers were very interested in learning how to protect their employees, equipment, cargo

and the public at large from burglars or even would-be terrorists,” said Ben Goodin, MoDOT motor carrier enforcement administrator. “Many times, simple improvements in lighting, fencing and locks made the biggest difference.”

Another benefit of the program is strong relationships.

“We hope that carriers who benefit from the program build trust with authorities and feel more comfortable reporting irregularities they see on the road,” said Goodin.

Based on information gathered during the pilot, TSA is developing security training for commercial motor vehicle inspectors and setting standards for carrier security. The program is expected to go nationwide shortly.

Spotlight on Diversity

The month of October is set aside annually as National Disability Employment Awareness Month to recognize the contributions that individuals with disabilities have made in the workplace and to draw special attention to specific barriers to the employment of the disabled that still need to be addressed and removed.

The EAC recently engaged in an exercise to build awareness and heighten sensitivity toward our coworkers with disabilities. Some wore slings or road in wheel chairs (supplied by Best Buy Homecare), representing a physical handicap. Others wore special earplugs or goggles covered in tape, representing hearing and visual impairments. Dur-

ing the activity, the Diversity Committee observed fellow EAC members and found the exercise to be a very humbling and educational experience.

A simulation such as this is just one way that people without disabilities try to better understand the every day life of our friends, neighbors or coworkers with a disability. There are other ways that may be even more effective, like communicating and interacting with a person with a disability, attending a demonstration on sign language techniques, or reading publications and literature written by persons with disabilities. In addition, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Division offers helpful etiquette for interacting with

individuals with disabilities on their Intranet site at www.intranet/eo/diversity-etiquette.htm.

Regardless of what activity you may choose to increase your understanding of others, remember that education is one of the most essential keys to breaking down barriers we put up toward others who are different from us – different in nationality, race, gender or even physical ability.

The bottom line is that all of us deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, no matter what our differences are. The EAC urges each work unit to engage in activities from time to time that foster a better understanding of all people in our workforce.

Did You Know?

During the month of November, we celebrate National American Indian Heritage Month in honor of the generations of American Indians and Alaska Natives who have added to the character of our nation.

Did you know that far before modern transportation systems were developed, the Inca built a road system that included suspension bridges for their runners or that the Mayans were among the first to master and extensively use concrete surfacing on major roads?

Freight, Freight and ... More Freight

MoDOT, like many state DOTs across the country, is working to get a handle on freight movement and development. Freight is literally a growing issue. Congestion, capacity, system durability, safety and traveler patience are all

being taxed as more and more freight is being moved on the transportation system.

In response to this growing demand, MoDOT has formed a Freight Development Team. The team includes repre-

sentatives from Districts 4, 6, 7 and 10, as well as representation from Multimodal, Transportation Planning, Motor Carriers, Traffic and Organizational Results divisions. External participants to the team include representatives from FHWA and the Department of Economic Development.

The freight development team is charged with becoming familiar with all the department does to facilitate freight movement, and then making it work better. Ultimately the team wants to ensure that Missouri becomes the national and global freight hub that it is positioned to be.

“It is important that MoDOT get more involved in advancing freight issues and there are many opportunities for Missouri to be a freight leader,” said Brian Weiler, director of the Multimodal division and the team champion. “This can

be challenging since many decisions impacting freight movement occur in the private sector . . . be it motor carriers, freight railroads, port operators or air freight delivery. Our role is to ensure that the transportation system is efficient, integrated, convenient and attractive for the freight industry.”

While the freight team is just beginning its work, the member have been amazed at just how much the department already does to support freight development. From Motor Carrier division’s streamlined processes, to ITS systems and “Fast Pass,” from freight considerations in the planning and design process to freight development research, MoDOT is working to get the freight moving in Missouri.

For more information, contact Brian Weiler at 751-7475.



Missouri Port operators discuss the role of ports and waterways in Missouri’s freight future.

November Service Anniversaries

4

30 Years	
Michael R. Logan	D1
Peter L. Robertson	D1
Lindell L. Parsons	D2
William K. Mingee	D4
Isaac J. Roberts	D4
Stephen A. Saale	D4
Kenneth R. Waters	D4
Terry L. Farrar	D5
Charles L. Crull	D6
Cecil E. Cameron	D8
Winston E. Boyer	D9
Sharon E. Dashtaki	CO
Robert A. Hartman	CO

25 Years	
Steven P. Hackett	D4
Lonny G. Halbert	D9
Wayne L. Hinkle	CO

20 Years	
Milton L. Harris	D4
Mary K. Otting	D5
Michelle A. Banning	D7

15 Years	
Betty J. Dwiggins	D2
Garrett D. Gillespie	D2
Daniel G. Winkler	D2
Michael S. Flake	D3
Jeremy G. Gibson	D3

Samuel D. Kemp	D3
Angela L. Talbott	D3
Mary J. Wagner	D3
Douglas L. Even	D5
Forrest L. Long	D5
Eric L. Mothersbaugh	D5
Randy J. Rice	D5
Richard L. Campbell	D6
Christina L. Hannar	D6
Otis R. Gipson	D7
Billy R. Wells	D9
George E. Earnheart	D10
Michael J. Prenger	CO
Reginald B. Vesser	CO

10 Years	
Kelly A. Hall	D3
Jerad R. Noland	D3
Derike A. Pitchford	D4
Gary D. Ricker	D9
Denise Hopper	D10
James T. Barnes	CO
Linda L. McEntire	CO

5 Years	
C. J. Bowman	D1
Raymond L. Gebhards	D1
Brian N. Smiley	D2
Scott A. Teter	D2
Robert M. Foster	D4
Wade D. Hildenbrand	D4

Deanna D. Phillips	D4
Brian W. Diehl	D6
Johnny W. Johnson	D6
Penny I. King	D6
Deborah K. Malle	D6
Rodney L. Diggins	D7
Lucas C. Dobbs	D7
Caleb A. Marlin	D8
Shane A. Smith	D8
Karl F. Desch	D9
Keith D. Lawson	D9

In Memoriam

Retirees		
Marion Glen Eskridge	D4	May 13
Paul E. Alexander	D4	Sept. 5
Marvin M. Shaffrey	D6	Sept. 6
Abner N. Gwinn	CO	Sept. 6
Larry Joe Lewis	D10	Sept. 9
Earl Arms	D2	Sept. 9
Robert C. Martin	D9	Sept. 11
Curtis D. Colbert	D3	Sept. 11
James “Galen” G. Ray	D5	Sept. 12
James S. Johnson	D4	Sept. 13
Herman J. Hilden	D5	Sept. 13
Donald L. Miller	D2	Sept. 30

September Retirements

Name	Location	Years of Service
Michael Bashor	D1	30
Marinus Dejong	D1	22
Paul Harwood	D1	28
Lewis Smith	D1	21
Walter Stapleton	D1	11
Richard Sears	D2	23
Patrick Hudspeth	D6	28
David Pearson	D6	28
Wayne Traube	D6	30
Robert Wisdom	D6	39
Terry Cahalan	D7	28
Jerry Wood	D9	24
Jerry Steward	D10	15
Macey Jett	CO	23
Maxine Johnson	CO	33
Colleen Kliethermes	CO	30
Daniel Monroe	CO	34
Judy Nguyen	CO	22
Mary Pointer	CO	31
Terry Sampson	CO	30
Mari Ann Winters	CO	37



Good Customer Service is Resource Management Director's Goal

by Sally Oxenhandler

Brenda Morris grew up in a small town in Illinois that “celebrates transportation.” In addition to the more traditional car shows, the town - Effingham - also has had “Transportation Progress Days.”

“It gave me a real appreciation for transportation and how vital it is,” said Morris, MoDOT’s new Resource Management director. “I realize transportation is at the heart of what we do here at MoDOT.”

Morris moved into her new position on Oct. 1. Before that she worked in several positions for the Audits and Investigations Division, most recently as an audits administrator. Morris worked for the State Auditor’s Office for eight years before coming to MoDOT in 1998.

The Resource Management Division is probably best known as the work unit that develops our annual budget. However, the 20 employees of the division are also responsible for federal financial

assistance, bonding, revenue forecasting and innovative financing programs.

“I want to continue improving Resource Management,” said Morris. “Our ultimate goal is to be the experts on managing MoDOT’s resources. We want to provide excellent customer service and produce accurate, timely and easily understood information.”

Morris has a bachelor’s degree in accounting from Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar. She also is certified as a public accountant, government finance manager and internal auditor. She and her husband, Jim, an architect, live near Lohman.



Wilson Elected to National Post

by Kristi Jamison

Jeannie Wilson, General Services manager in the Central Office, was recently named vice president of the National Conference of State Fleet Administrators. Wilson was elected by her peers at the organization’s annual conference held in Hershey, Pa. in September. She will serve a two-year term.

“This is a great honor and I am looking forward to serving in this capacity,” Wilson said. “NCSFA is a fantastic group of professionals that I am proud to be affiliated with.”

Wilson will bring excellent leadership skills to the office and will be in a prime position to share with her peers how MoDOT is a leader in the use of alternative fuels and how we are incorporating new technologies into our fleet, such as our participation in a unique pilot program to test new hybrid truck

technologies. She will also share best practices Missouri has applied through our performance management efforts in the areas of fuel consumption, fleet reduction and multi-functional equipment.

The NCSFA is a non-profit organization comprised of 150 fleet administration professionals. The group promotes communication, fleet management education and peer-to-peer networking opportunities among fleet professionals involved with the management of state and university fleet programs.



for more info

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Kelly Lucas is New Right of Way Director

by Bob Brendel

Kelly Lucas, former Right of Way Manager in District 2 – Macon, is MoDOT’s new Right of Way Director. She replaces Terry Sampson who retired this summer.

Lucas has advanced through the ranks since joining MoDOT in Fiscal Services in 1986.

She began working in Right of Way as a clerk in 1988, was later promoted to Right of Way agent, and progressed through the Right of Way specialist series in the areas of appraisals, negotiations and condemnation.



A graduate of William Woods University, Lucas and husband Patrick are the parents of children Garret and Addison.

Caution: Internal Work Zone

by Kristi Jamison

Things may be a little out of order these days at the Central Office General Service facility at 830 MoDOT Drive. As of Oct. 1, the staff and most of the products stored within the Distribution Center were temporarily relocated to the northwest portion of the building so that construction crews can reinforce the weakened roof structure.

Fixing the roof in this part of the building will not only bring it up to current

ity service we usually do to both our internal and external customers while this work is being done,” said Rebecca Jackson, Central Office General Services manager. “But this internal work zone will be a challenge!”

In order to relocate the Distribution Center and its staff, all fleet vehicles first had to be relocated to the parking lot so the contents from the Distribution Center could be stored there



construction codes, but more importantly it will ensure that our employees and external customers are able to work in a safe environment.

If you remember, last December the facility that houses the Distribution Center, Travel Services, Central Office Procurement and District 5 Maintenance staff had to be temporarily evacuated following a winter storm that covered the roof with about 1,000 tons of snow and ice. Maintenance crews were able to remove the snow and ice, but the weight took a toll on the structure covering the Distribution Center.

The construction will briefly disrupt business as usual at Travel Services and the Distribution Center, which houses several items that support our MoDOT forces from safety gear to hand tools to various snowplow and mower parts.

“We still plan to provide the same qual-

instead (see photo above). Then on Oct. 16, the pool operation was temporarily relocated to the old garage at 601 W. Main St. – across the street from the Secretary of State’s office building.

“We apologize for any inconvenience that the relocation of our staff, products and services is causing; however, the safety of our staff and other coworkers, as well as external customers is our greatest concern,” Jackson said. “We appreciate everyone’s patience and cooperation.

The construction project is expected to take up to six months. General Services will keep us informed about additional changes in service and about the construction project itself by sending e-mails, offering helpful tips and posting construction updates to the General Services Intranet site.

D1

Northwest

Preventing Tragedy

by M. Elaine Justus

Saving lives on our highways is a MoDOT commitment. Whether it is through the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety or our own Regional Blueprint Coalition, we have actively sought ways to reduce the number of driving fatalities.

One way, among many, is the child safety seat inspection effort. Not only do we train inspection technicians and sponsor free child safety seat inspections, we go a step further. Working in cooperation with the division of Highway Safety, the St. Joseph Safety and Health Council and various similar entities throughout our 12-county region, we provide new car seats to



Over 60 rejected confiscated seats were accumulated over the last year for this event.



Lining up the seats with the tracks assured mass destruction (we thought).

families who cannot afford to replace the defective ones we reject.

The question then becomes, what do we do with all of these rejected seats? That’s an easy one to answer when you



The resiliency of the seats made it necessary for the Track Hoe to “lift itself” up onto the seats to keep the seats from bouncing ahead of the tracks.



It was a testament to the construction of the seats that it took repeated passes by the machine in order to destroy them. They just kept “bouncing” back into shape.

are an organization such as MoDOT that owns lots of big, yellow equipment and a twisted sense of humor: you crush them.

On October 11, spectators and the media lined up to be a witness to the destruction. First, to assure maximum effect, we lined up the seats with the tracks on a 52,500 (roughly) pound machine.

Then we stood back while Maintenance Supervisor Roger Wittler (with a

smile on his face) fired up the 25-ton Link-Belt Tracked Excavator. To say it was impressive would be an understatement. To quote the *St. Joseph News-Press*, “Spectators could feel the ground shake as a tracked excavator revved its diesel engine and proceeded to destroy 60 dated child safety seats . . . like some gigantic prehistoric monster.”

So, besides a little excitement, why did we do it? According to Gerald Duty, director of the St. Joseph Safety and Health Council, “Even today, with all the education we’ve tried to do, 90 percent of the children are riding in unsafe seats.” Facts show that seven out of 10 kids are needlessly at risk in a traffic crash.

One of our goals was to educate the public about the criteria a child safety seat needs to meet in order to be considered “safe.” In addition, we wanted to publicize a free safety check we were sponsoring the following week. With all the coverage from television, radio and newspaper, we just might have succeeded.

6 Children Are The Future

by Holly L. Murphy

The second “front” in this battle to keep children safe is educating the children themselves. Here in the Northwest District, we think it is never too early to start. Senior Community Relations Specialist Holly Murphy, Correy Miller, senior maintenance worker at Cameron, and Krista Burnett, district utilities engineer, took their “educational” show on the road



Holly Lea Murphy

and visited with the kids at the Cameron Daycare/Preschool center recently. The children were very young, but not too young to understand the importance of buckling up.

They especially loved our teddy bear

who was buckled up in his car seat. The big kid in the middle of the back row is Correy Miller. He made sure that everyone was wearing the appropriate high-visibility clothing.

What Makes a Child Safety Seat Defective?

- Being more than six years old (check date of manufacture on label)
- Missing, worn or broken parts, webbing, or buckles
- Recalled by the manufacturer (check Web site: www.nhsta.dot.gov/)
- Involved in a moderate or severe crash
- Garage sale or thrift store seats have an unknown history and should not be trusted

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D2

North Central

It Keeps Growing and Growing....

by Tammy Wallace

It was just a year ago that a team of MoDOT employees came together to discuss a new concept for the District, an idea now called the District 2 Employee Fund. The team wanted to figure out a way to raise money throughout the district to help employees who could use some additional cash during hard times.

The original development team bounced around ideas, surveyed all employees, bounced around ideas, surveyed more employees, and so on and so on. The end result was a great program that would allow work units to hold events to raise money, a process for supervisors and employees to submit the name of a co-worker in need, and a committee to review the requests and allocate the funds. It sounds fairly simple, but a lot of employees had to get involved to get this program off the ground.

The first fundraising event was held during the 2006 employee fall meetings by the management team, who raffled off District Engineer Dan Niec. The buildings with the largest contributions to the new fund were able to have Dan visit their work unit to spend a day working in their shoes. Dan has shoveled material to patch shoulders, run the striping machine and done other work to pay off the debt. That first event raised \$454 for the fund, which



was a good start for this new concept.

Following right on the heels of the first event, General Services wasted no time in holding a silent auction, setting the bar high by raising an astonishing \$865.

To date, a total of 18 events have been held. Employees have donated hand-made items to raffle, baked goods have been sold, breakfasts and lunches prepared, a poker run, a head-shaving contest and two golf tournaments, just to name a few.

District 2 employees are really getting into organizing the events and also participating. The most recent fundraiser, a golf tournament on Columbus Day, raised a total of \$1,905, the most money so far for one event.

“We weren’t sure how this would work since we had never tried anything like it before,” said HR Manager Ellen Gehringer. “But now that we have raised over \$7,000 in one year, it shows

how willing employees are to take an active part in helping their co-workers. I think everyone is very proud of what we’ve accomplished.”

The employee fund has helped 12 employees so far, and more events are on the way. Two employees have donated items to raffle during the upcoming fall meetings, right where the whole thing started one year ago.

Information on the employee fund is located on the district Web site.



Support Services Manager Steven Pike either won or lost the head-shaving contest, depending on how you look at it. Either way, Sr. Financial Services Specialist Teresa Farmer doesn't seem to mind her turn at the razor.

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Nobody Does It Better

by Tammy Wallace

How important is good customer service? Important enough that each year an entire week is devoted to recognizing the efforts of employees across the globe who provide great customer service every day.

We all know that as MoDOT employees we need to provide good customer service, and that’s true. However, there are three individuals who devote eight hours a day, five days a week to providing our customers, both internal

a great job being the voice and face of MoDOT.

Additionally, we have five great backups who are always there to help us out when we need them - Carla Farrington, Denise Hutchinson, Donna Martin, Pam Mettes and Diane Nanneman. They, too, are top notch when dealing with customers.

Extremely timely was a conversation I recently had with Senior Traffic Specialist Steve Tarr. Nearing the



Customer Service Representatives Teresa Hall, Anthony Zuccarini and Sandra Riley.

and external, with the highest level of service. Those of course being Sandy Riley, Teresa Hall and Anthony Zuccarini, our District 2 customer service representatives.

MoDOT’s standard requires fast, professional and courteous service, and that’s exactly what customers get when they talk with any of our three reps. No matter how perplexing the question or how trying the customer, these three do

end of my conversation with him, Steve said, “By the way, I want to let you know that I appreciate the work customer service does for us. They do a good job dealing with people, screening the calls to get customers the right people to talk to, and even calming some folks down when necessary. They do a really great job for us.”

So, thank you Sandy, Teresa and Anthony for all that you do every day to make our customers feel they are important and that MoDOT is not a big unapproachable government agency; just regular folks working hard to provide good service.

Maybe It's The Kids

by Tammy Wallace

Another year of summer fairs, expos and events has come and gone. What keeps Customer Service, Risk Management and other employees from Maintenance and various divisions spending their Saturdays working these events?

Many of the folks will tell you it’s all about the kids. Not to say that the adults aren’t enjoyable to visit with as well, but there’s just something about those kids.

Maybe it’s their big eyes and smiling faces when you hand them a tee-shirt that says “Buckle Up Arrive Alive” after they’ve played a game to win a

prize. Or maybe it’s watching them ride their trikes and bikes around the simulated work zone while you talk about safety.

Whatever it is, our employees keep attending these events every year without complaint.

It is estimated that nearly 2,000 customers were greeted by District 2 employees this summer during these special events.

Thanks to everyone who had a hand in another summer of community outreach.



D3

Northeast

Bond Bridge Dedicated

The Northeast District has had a lot to celebrate in the last few months, including two successful ceremonies signifying the importance of continuing improvements on our transportation system. All projects featured on this page involve teamwork and partnerships with our own staff as well as members of the communities and elected officials. While not every success story can be featured on the page, the Northeast District is WOWing its region with pride!



Mike Carroll of Harrington & Cortelyou; Kirk Juranas, District Engineer - Springfield; Roger Schwartze, District Engineer - Central District; Kevin Eisenbeis of Harrington & Cortelyou; and Ed Hassinger, District Engineer for St. Louis await Sen. Christopher Bond and Rep. Kenny Hulshof's return across the new bridge.

Pavement Repair Team Recognized by AASHTO

In 2006, the pavement repair team from the Northeast District put a lot of hours on the roads, and not just in northeast Missouri. The team helped the St. Louis District prepare for significant resurfacing that would occur as a result of the Smooth Roads Initiative. Many long hours, long drives, and a lot of concrete poured resulted in MoDOT's successfully completing SRI one year ahead of schedule. The team was presented their Honorable Mention certificate by MoDOT managers.



The Pavement Repair Team received an honorable mention award from AASHTO. They are Josh Welder, James Rockhold, Alphonse Dames, Connie Krigbaum, John Moore, Andy Dittmer, Sam Vice, Ted Smith, Butch Mundle, and Tim Inman. Not pictured is Assistant Supervisor Simon Begley.

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After "flipping the switch" for the beautiful historical lighting on the new bridge, Senator Christopher S. "Kit" Bond spoke of determination and commitment from the people of Hermann and the surrounding communities. He especially recognized the Route 19 Missouri River Bridge Transportation Corporation for their efforts to have a new bridge in Hermann. The new bridge is named the "Senator Christopher S Bond Bridge."



Jon Held, a member of the Route 19 Missouri River Transportation Corporation and master of ceremonies for the event, visits with Kevin Eisenbeis of Harrington & Cortelyou and MoDOT Chief Engineer Kevin Keith during a reception.



Jon Held presents MoDOT Transportation Project Manager Rick Domzalski with a token of appreciation for all his work as project manager for the new bridge.

Route C Opens

More than 150 people gathered for the official ribbon-cutting of the new interchange at Route C in Moscow Mills, including former Sen. Jon Dolan, who worked with MoDOT to make funding available for the project. When the interchange opened, three median cross-overs were closed, making Route 61 a safer road to travel in the area.



Northeast District Engineer Paula Gough; Rachel McCombs from Sen.Christopher Bond's office; Jan Fravell, president of the Moscow Mills Chamber of Commerce; Jim Mitas with Congressman Todd Akin's office; Sen. Scott Rupp; Rep. Ed Schieffer; and former Sen. Jon Dolan cut the ribbon while the audience released balloons provided by a local boy scout troop.

D4

Kansas City Area

MoDOT and Kansas City Complete Downtown Bridges

by Steve Porter

Elton John, Hannah Montana, Garth Brooks and other performers at Kansas City's new Sprint Center probably won't notice them. But residents and visitors are sure to appreciate new pedestrian-friendly bridges over Interstate 670 on the south side of the downtown arena.

MoDOT District 4, the city of Kansas City and the Downtown Council civic group combined forces to add wider sidewalks and aesthetically pleasing elements to the structures that will connect Sprint Center patrons with parking facilities just to the south of the \$276 million facility.

MoDOT, Kansas City and the Downtown Council celebrated the completion of the Truman Road, Oak and Locust Street bridges during a ribbon cutting ceremony on Oct. 3.

These bridges and the realignment of Truman Road are a \$13 million portion of more than \$26 million MoDOT has invested in highway improvements in the Downtown Loop in the past two years. Most of this work is funded through Amendment 3, and is the first to be completed of MoDOT's Amendment 3 commitment.

These three bridges earned MoDOT's Practical Design Award for cost-effective, innovative transportation design. Parts of these cooperative improvements with Kansas City and the Downtown Council earned the American Institute of Architects' 2007 Excellence in Design award in August.

MoDOT met the city's challenge to open the Truman Road, Oak and Locust Street bridges in time for the Sprint Center's inaugural event, an Elton John concert, which was held Oct. 13. Kansas City and the Downtown Council worked with MoDOT to place decorative panels on several bridges over Interstate 670 in addition to the decorative railing on the Truman, Oak and Locust bridges.



Wayne Cauthen, city manager for Kansas City, spoke about the cooperative effort between Kansas City and MoDOT to complete the bridges as promised and in time for the opening of the Sprint Center.



One of Kansas City's newest landmarks, the Sprint Center, serves as a fitting backdrop as representatives from MoDOT, Kansas City, the Downtown Council, and contractors cut the blue ribbon, signifying the completion of three downtown bridges.

From left to right: Mary Miller, MoDOT D4 project manager; Jim Kinder, HNTB project manager; Bakul Desai, HNTB bridge engineer; Linda Clark, D4 assistant district engineer; Beth Wright, D4 district engineer; Wayne Cauthen, city manager for Kansas City; Bill Dietrich, Downtown Council; Stan Harris, Public Works director for Kansas City; Brian Cichello, Clarkson Construction Company; Matt Killion, D4 resident engineer; and Perry Allen, D4 construction and materials engineer.

Crews Saddled Up For the Snow Rodeo

by Kerri Lewis

As much as we may hate to think about it, snow season is approaching – and MoDOT crews are preparing for winter's worst.

In September, the Kansas City region's snow-removal forces participated in a district-wide Winter Skills Rodeo, a competition that focused on training and refreshing winter driving skills.

This competition hones the skills needed to safely operate snowplows, loaders and other equipment. Tests

simulate backing into narrow spaces for loading, plowing in a straight line and through obstacles and clearing curbs and interchanges.

MoDOT annually invests more than \$27 million to clear snow and ice from Missouri highways. The Rodeo helps ensure that crews are trained to use that money efficiently as they keep the state's highways safe and clear during winter months.

Several employees participated in the District 4 competition. The top two



Danny Everts, Maintenance crew leader, maneuvers a loader between cones, racing against the clock.

move on to the statewide competition in Sedalia, which took place at 7:30 a.m., Thursday, Oct. 18.

D4's representatives in Sedalia were: Joey Edwards, Higginsville Maintenance

building, with a total of 4,940 out of 5,000 points.

Eric Nold, Clinton Maintenance building, with a total of 4,854 out of 5,000 points.

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D5

Central

Construction Begins on Expressway at Lake of the Ozarks

by Holly Dentner

Motorists who drove along U.S. Route 54 through Osage Beach on Oct. 18 might have noticed a crowd gathered on a hill near Bluff Drive. Most were probably focused on making their way along the busy road that serves an average of 43,000 vehicles per day during the summer months.



Osage Beach police officer Rick Arnall sings "God Bless the USA" with the School of the Osage Upper Elementary Choralettes.

Wes Farris

next big project in the Lake of the Ozarks area – the Route 54 Expressway. The first \$30 million section of the new expressway includes grading, drainage, paving and retaining wall and bridge construction on a three-mile section from the Grand Glaize Bridge to just east of Route 42. The project also includes a new interchange at Route 42 and at Passover Road.

The groundbreaking celebration began with the presentation of colors by the Lake Ozark Cub Scout Pack 21. Garrett Lynch, son of Area Engineer Bob Lynch, sang the national anthem. Choral groups from Osage Beach Elementary and School of the Osage sang patriotic medleys. After five speakers took the stage to show their appreciation for the project, Chief Engineer

The crowd was gathered to celebrate the beginning of the Central District's



Jennifer Ranabargar

After the presentation of colors that began the ceremony, cub scouts from the Lake Ozark Cub Scout Pack 21 kept the flags steady in the windy weather.

Kevin Keith got behind the controls of an earthmover and officially broke ground on the new road.

Approximately 250 people attended the ceremony, including state representatives, county commissioners, city and county leaders and other dignitaries.

Work on this section of the expressway is scheduled for completion by spring 2010. McAninch Corporation of Des

Moines, Iowa, was awarded the construction contract in September 2007.

This is the first of three projects to build the new expressway, with two more to follow. Work is already under way on a separate contract to construct an overpass bridge near Home Depot in Osage Beach. When completed, the new Route 54 Expressway will improve safety and minimize congestion through the area.

Around the District



Jim Honse

Maintenance crews in Gasconade County got some help from District 3 to complete a 13-mile cinder seal project on Route 100 south of Hermann.



Area Engineer Bob Lynch and Buckle Bear teach seat belt safety to first graders at School of the Osage in Miller County.



Kristin Gerber

Members of the Whitton Expressway Advisory Committee review progress made so far on the environmental impact study. The advisory committee is comprised of key stakeholders in Jefferson City and Cole County.

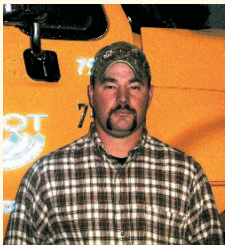


Butch Bradley

Members of the Columbia Maintenance crew attach a snow plow to a truck as part of their annual winter weather preparations day.

Employees Advance to Statewide Roadeo

Many, many hours of practice last winter paid off for Senior Maintenance Worker Jason Lackman, who had the highest score at this



Justin Anderson, senior maintenance worker at Sedalia.

year's Central District Winter Driving Skills Roadeo. The Roadeo emphasizes safety and efficiency while driving plow-equipped trucks to clear snow and ice from the roads and operating loaders to store and load materials. Employees had to complete a written exam, a pre-trip vehicle inspection, and a hands-on driving skills course that assessed their ability to operate the winter weather equipment.

Jason has worked for MoDOT for 14 years and is a member of the district's concrete crew. He said that driving the truck and loader through the course

takes a lot of skill, and it was much harder than it looked.

Justin Anderson, a senior maintenance worker at the Sedalia maintenance building, had the second highest score in the district roadeo. Justin said he was happy but surprised to rank so high within the district because there were so many people participating.

Like many other participants at the district's roadeo, Justin and Jason hope they don't have to use their snowplow expertise too often over the next few months.



Holly Dentner

Jason Lackman, senior maintenance worker for the concrete crew.

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D6

St. Louis Area

District 6's Successful Winter Skills Rodeo

by Kara Price / photos by Cathy Morrison

Our job during a winter storm is vitally important and motorists are counting on MoDOT to keep them safe. District 6 hosted a Winter Skills Rodeo competition this year at the St. Charles maintenance lot starting Sept. 11. The Rodeo ensures that our employees have the knowledge and skills necessary to perform snow removal job tasks safely and efficiently.

This competition gave snow operators an opportunity to show their skills and pass on tips to newer employees. The two winners of the District 6 Rodeo were Kelly Hensen, maintenance crew leader at House Springs, and Brandon Anderson, intermediate maintenance technician with Damage Control. Hensen has been with MoDOT for 22 years and Anderson has been employed for four years. Both winners competed at the statewide Rodeo against other district winners to be the best in Mis-

souri on Oct. 18 in Sedalia. Henson placed 9th and Anderson placed 14th where their combined scores put the district in 6th place within MoDOT.

Employees were trained for a variety of skills needed to operate a snowplow truck and loader. The Rodeo competition involved a written exam, pre-trip inspection and driving competition.

The Rodeo Planning Committee* would like to extend a special thank you to the following MoDOT employees for their support and hard work in making this year's Rodeo a huge success:

- St. Charles Maintenance building employees
- Judges who helped with scorekeeping and re-setting the course
- Mike King and Paul Henke from the St. Peters Project Office for surveying the courses



Judges observe an employee's winter skills of operating a loader.

- Mechanics Richard Fennewald, Jeff Fluchel, Kenny Breidenbach, Dan Deters, Matt Koenig
- Diana Allbright
- Christina Hannar
- Mark Turskoski

**The Rodeo Planning Committee includes: Kent Bequette, Ron Ebmeier, Owen Hasson, Mike Johns, Kara Price, Carolyn Smith, Lauren Teson.*



A snow operator shows his skills of operating a snowplow truck.



District 6 Engineer Ed Hassinger competes in this year's Winter Skills Rodeo during the snowplow truck course.

A Big Night For MoDOT at the St. Louis Cardinals Game

photos by Cathy Morrison



MoDOT Director Pete Rahn talks with Fox Sports Network about the Interstate 64 project, our travel information tools and bridge safety in Missouri.



Rahn throws out the first pitch for the St. Louis Cardinals game versus the Houston Astros on Sept. 21.



Rahn talks with Mike Shannon in the KTRS booth about Child Passenger Safety Week and the importance of buckling up.



The Missouri State Highway Patrol supported the seat belt safety messages by running the Seat Belt Convincer.

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D7

Southwest

To Iraq, with Love

by Lori Marble

MoDOT crew members place themselves in harm's way on a daily basis. They keep a watchful eye for speeding motorists and prepare to fight the winter's onslaught of ice and snow.

Recent world events have placed some team members thousands of miles



Melinda and Derik Campbell at his send-off party in August.

away, where the 115-degree days make even the memory of snow welcome and where bullets and bombs are on everyone's radar screen.

District 7's Special Crews Maintenance Supervisor Derik Campbell left in August for up to a year in Iraq with the Air Force Reserves. His MoDOT coworkers spent the last couple of weeks gathering items for a care package mailing.

"Derik's been on everyone's mind," said Wendy Brunner-Lewis, senior Community Relations specialist. "We were looking for a way to touch base with him and let him know we care, when the idea of a care package came up."

Brunner-Lewis and other district office friends organized a surprise farewell party for Campbell a week before his deployment.

"We didn't want the 'send-off' to be our only chance to recognize Derik," she said. "A year is such an incredibly



Intermediate Survey Technician Justin Forrest (left) and Regional Maintenance Supervisor Ron Combs hand Senior Community Relations Specialist Wendy Brunner-Lewis items for Derik's care package.

long time. We had to do something more."

Immediately upon sending an e-mail requesting items Campbell would enjoy receiving, the Customer Service office was swamped with donations. Snacks, personal hygiene items and magazines were quickly stacked and ready for mailing.

Knowing that Campbell misses his MoDOT family and is anxious to return to his activities on Missouri roadways, Human Resources Manager Paul Todey reworked a special MAPS form to keep his job-related skills sharp and

ready for his return. To keep Campbell smiling, Todey stuck a note on it for Campbell to sign and return the form by a date that passed before the care package was even mailed.

The MAPS form read in part:

- Expectation #1: Clean rifle daily, shine moon boots, eat everything on your plate (Tangible Result/Tracker Measure: Best value for every dollar spent)
- Expectation #2: Perform concrete replacement as needed in crater holes (Tangible Result/Tracker Measure: Smooth traffic flow)
- Expectation #3: Borrow an M1-A1 and simulate snow plowing to keep skills sharp (Tangible Result/Tracker Measure: Practice makes perfect)
- Expectation #4: Develop skills with IED's to make concrete removal from bridge decks easier (Tangible Result/Tracker Measure: Smoother, Safer, Sooner)
- Expectation #5: Conduct monthly safety meetings with your air-wing – instruct them to drive slow in work zones (Tangible Result/Tracker Measure: Safety)

"I know Derik is going to be shocked when he starts receiving box after box from us," said Brunner-Lewis. "I was really touched by how everyone pulled together to donate items to him, and I know it will mean a lot to him, too."

Trucks, Fences and Animals at FFA Day

by Lori Marble

What do you get when you combine a bunch of elementary kids, some horses and a few District 7 folks? You've got yourself FFA Day at El Dorado Springs.

This annual event, which drew in over 600 students, showcased various "stations" of interest for life in rural Missouri. There was a station for fences, explaining how fences are made and put in place, a horse station and, of course, a MoDOT station.

"I love the interaction with the kids," said Doris (DeeDee) Powell, customer

service representative. "I helped explain what MoDOT stood for and what we do every day. The questions the kids asked were great."

Regardless of age, the students – pre-kindergarten through 7th grade – enjoyed getting near the equipment and especially being allowed to blow the truck's air horn.

El Dorado Springs maintenance team members Brian Wood and Greg Smith worked with Powell on the event. It was especially gratifying for Wood and Smith being fathers of students themselves.

One of the highlights of the day was when a very excited young boy yelled when approaching the MoDOT display, "Hey, my granddad works for MoDOT!" Maintenance Superintendent Don Boultinghouse was one proud papa.



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Thank You, Thank You Very Much, Adrian

by Lori Marble

It's with good reason that Project Manager Sean Matlock is affectionately known as Elvis. And apparently in the Bates County town of Adrian he is loved as much as the late singer.

"I don't know that I feel adored," said Matlock with a chuckle, "but I really have enjoyed this job."

The nickname began after Matlock and project team members returned from a public meeting carrying dozens of homemade cookies prepared by the town's mayor.

"Everyone in Adrian has a strong sense of community," said Matlock. "No one is pretentious, there are no selfish motivations."



This sign posted on the Adrian Clinic's door shows appreciation for the project.

Like all districts, the Southwest office routinely receives requests to partner on projects. It was a pleasant surprise to learn that not only did the city of Adrian have a plan to fix their winter-time parking problems on Route 18 – while at the same time revitalizing their downtown – they had funds available. With planning like that, partnering with the city to make "Vision 2007" a reality was an easy call.

Vision 2007 was celebrated with a ribbon cutting ceremony on Oct. 13. The project:

- completely rebuilt the downtown road, sidewalks and storm drainage,
- reduced the length of the crosswalks (reducing exposure time to traffic), and
- slowed through traffic.

"The people and business owners of Adrian were just great to work with," said Matlock. "They made us feel like knights in shining armor. It's hard to get that on big projects."

With the \$667,775 project complete, Matlock should take a lesson from the lyrics of Wynonna Judd's song "Sometimes I Feel Like Elvis." *I've never felt so helpless. I don't know who I am now that you're gone. Sometimes I feel like Elvis.*

D8

Springfield Area



D8 at Work

A new culvert is installed on Laclede County Route N east of Lebanon (top left photo). Metal pipes had been washed away during a late August rain-storm. Placing one of the concrete culverts (inset photo) are, from left, Maintenance Crew Leader Mike Wade, Regional Maintenance Supervisor Ron Wheeler and Senior Maintenance Worker Brad Rumpf, with Intermediate Maintenance Worker Brent Jones in the bulldozer.

Members of the Bridge Crew repair the deck on the Route 13 bridge over Table Rock Lake at Kimberling City (top right photo). They are, from left, Seasonal Crew Workers Wes Smith, Larry Allen and Tim Hill.

Meeting with Journagan Construction officials (middle right photo) on Route 54 east of Preston is Senior Construction Inspector Ken Reding, center. The project involves resurfacing the highway and improving shoulders.

Working the Missouri Blueprint for Roadway Safety booth at the Farm Fest in Springfield (bottom right photo) is Project Development Administrative Technician Shay Wehmer, right. She talks with Ali, left, and Lanie Ipock, children of former MoDOT employee Ross Ipock.



Bob Edwards

Towplows Will Clear Wider Swath on Big Roads

by Angela Eden

District 8's arsenal of snow-clearing equipment this winter will feature towplows for the first time.

Each of the two new towplows will enable a truck to clear up to a 22- to 24-foot wide swath on a four-lane highway.

Two new, higher horsepower trucks will be deployed to pull the new towplows. Each of the trucks also will be equipped with a 14-foot wide front-mounted plow and an under-belly plow. Offsetting the front and rear plows will result in a wider path.

Sunshine Maintenance will get one of the two-plow rigs to use on busy highways like Interstate 44 and Route 60 in the Springfield metro area. Branson Maintenance will get one to use on Route 65 in Branson where median

barrier walls pose a challenge for regular plows.

Towplows have been in use for several years in St. Louis and Kansas City. The Joplin district acquired one last year.

"They love them," said District Maintenance Engineer Dave O'Connor, referring to the other districts. "It cuts down on the need for extra trucks" plowing side-by-side on multi-lane roads.

The district is spending warm-weather time preparing for snow removal:

- Snowplow operators went through extensive winter skills training in August.
- Salt storage facilities are filled to capacity – 22,000 tons.

- Salt spreaders on nearly 180 dump trucks will be calibrated.
- More district employees are added to the pool of workers available to drive snowplows or work in the Customer Service Center during 24/7 snowstorm operations.

"For a typical winter, whether we have three inches of snow or two feet, we should be in good shape," said Assistant District Engineer Matt Seiler. "Our winter assessment training helped people get ready."

13

Maintenance Veteran Retires

by Angela Eden

Seymour Maintenance Supervisor Roger Markle

Service: 33 years (Hired Nov. 1, 1974)

Career: Maintenance worker to senior maintenance worker, Ozark Maintenance, 1974-2000; local maintenance supervisor, Seymour, 2000

Memorable Work: Overseeing the construction of the new Ozark Maintenance Facility in 1995; building shoulders along Webster County Route C

Quote: "I'll miss the camaraderie and the friendships. ... Our families have grown up together."

Post-MoDOT Plans: Hunting and fishing; traveling with wife Janice; playing in the snow with grandkids



Roger Markle

"Talkin' Transportation"
Call-In Radio Show

KWTO 560 AM, Springfield

10-10:50 a.m. Wednesdays

radiospringfield.com

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D9

South Central

Third Annual Employee Appreciation Held in October

For the third year, District Engineer Tom Stehn welcomed the employees of the South Central District to Employee Appreciation events held in four locations during early October. At each event, employees were treated to an update regarding MoDOT, award presentations, employee slide show of photos from throughout the previous year and lunch served by members of the management team.

“We have been through a lot, both positive and negative, but we have come through it as a team,” Tom said. “I have asked you many times to be prepared to answer the call and you have come through each time.”

While addressing the group, he covered statewide topics such as the Safe &

Sound bridge program, funding and the MoDOT bid for the Missouri Quality Award. He also discussed district level focuses.

Tom stressed the importance of each employee’s voice and how it should be heard without fear of retaliation. He also covered several avenues for increasing communication, which recently have been rolled out, including a district level Employee Advisory Council designed to provide statewide representatives with better feedback from employees and communication rounds.

Communication rounds are meetings held at least once per quarter in every maintenance facility and department

by pairs of management team members in an effort to build relationships and share information.

Tom also recognized performance plus achievements and presented certificates for low and no sick leave usage during 2006. “It has become a tradition in this district to recognize those who use little or no sick leave,” he said.

The South Central District significantly reduced its sick leave usage during 2006. Of the 406 eligible employees in 2006 (full-time employee from January 1 - December 31, 2006), 15 percent used no sick leave and 9 percent used 10 hours or less. Certificates and pins were presented to these employees and the number of years they have been recognized was announced.

Following the presentations, Tom dismissed the group to be served a lunch consisting of barbecue sandwiches, potato salad, baked beans and cupcakes. Maintenance Engineer Henry Haggard, who was assisted at each luncheon by Bellevue Maintenance Supervisor Brian Long, prepared the barbecue.

“This yearly event is a great opportunity to thank our employees for the service they provide to the people of Missouri, bring them up to speed on the direction of MoDOT, recognize them for accomplishments and build our team,” Tom said. “I believe everyone enjoyed the event and I appreciate them for all they do.”



Winter Skills Rodeo Yields High Scores Top 10 All Above 98 Percent

It was a tight leader board during the South Central District Winter Skills Rodeo in September. After three full days of participants running the courses and taking part in training sessions, the top 10 revealed scores ranging from 98.16 to 98.88 percent.

South Central District Maintenance Engineer Henry Haggard said he was pleased with the display of skill and expertise. “Our crews are well prepared for taking to the roads when winter weather arrives,” he said. “All scores were in the mid-80s or above.”

- The top 10, including numbers 1 and 2 who advanced to the statewide Rodeo in Sedalia were:
1. Don Cooper, West Plains, 98.88%
 2. Kerry Grogan, Summersville, 98.60%
 3. Doug Glaser, Bellevue, 98.60%
 4. Rodney Aldridge, Willow Springs, 98.40%
 5. Tom Rutledge, Winona, 98.36%
 6. Randall Ipock, Winona, 98.32%
 7. Bill Barred, Salem, 98.32%
 8. Mike Frazier, Willow Springs, 98.32%
 9. Ryan Williams, Potosi, 98.20%
 10. James Neal, Alton, 98.16%



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D9 Retains CPR/First Aid Crown

For the second year in a row, South Central District First Aid/CPR instructors were honored to bring home the statewide traveling plaque for largest percentage of certified employees. With 85 percent of employees having become certified, the group who had worked so hard conducting multiple classes had plenty of reason for their pride.

According to Instructor and Dixon Maintenance Supervisor Dennis Doss, now is not the time to get comfortable. “This may be the second year for us to win the plaque, but I view it as incentive for us to work harder on getting more employees certified,” he said. “District 5 made a point to say they were going

to take it home next year. This will be my last year to lead classes since I plan on retiring, so I have plans to work very hard on it. It is satisfactory as an instructor to have the plaque come to the district.”

Dennis said he believes it is important to become certified for the safety of your fellow employees as well as your family. “Heart attacks, etcetera can happen even to your family members,” he said.

District Engineer Tom Stehn has set the certification bar high. Two years ago, the district achieved 99 percent. “I now know its possible and intend to make this a priority again this year in our district.”



Pictured from left, first row: Connie Morrison, Melanie Curlile, Ben Meredith and Keith Elliott. Second row: Pam Griffin, Dennis Doss and Danny Bassett. Third row: Todd Adams and Martin Bell.

D10

Southeast

District 10 Holds Successful Winter Skills Rodeo



The Southeast District Rodeo planning committee (left) kicked off D10's Winter Skills Rodeo at the district office in Sikeston on Sept. 18. As part of the Rodeo training, employees completed a written exam, pre-trip vehicle inspections and hands-on driving skills courses. Employee scores were kept on each component with the top 10 overall scores advancing to the district finals on Sept. 27.



The top 10 employees from D10 that competed in the district finals include: Nathan Orf, Ste. Genevieve; Tim Crader, Marble Hill; Tommy Brown, Silva; Mike Hyslop, Sikeston Signal; David Tropf, Marble Hill; Gary Brewer, Perryville; Joseph Hoehn, Perryville; Dan Haertling, Perryville; Brad Cook, Patton; Nicholas Elliott, Park Hills.

The top 10 employees went through various training exercises at the district finals, with the top two overall scores advancing to the state finals in Sedalia. Intermediate Maintenance Worker Joseph Hoehn, Perryville (left), came in first place and Senior Maintenance Worker Nicholas Elliott, Park Hills, came in second. Both employees received certificates and a MoDOT jacket for finishing in the top two in the district.



In addition to the truck and loader events, D10 also had an optional event with the backhoe. Those who competed tested their skills by maneuvering a bowling ball through various obstacles.

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Ribboncuttings Held in Southeast District



The Honorable Barbara Lohr, mayor of Jackson, cuts the ribbon on Sept. 7 during the dedication ceremony of phase two of the Route 34/72 improvements in Jackson. Phase two of the improvements extended from one mile west of the Route 25 intersection to 2.2 miles west of Route 25, and included widening and resurfacing. It also included the addition of signals, curb and gutter and storm sewer. The contract was awarded in 2006 to Penzel Construction Company, Inc. of Jackson.



The Honorable John Clark, mayor of Park Hills, cuts the ribbon that officially opened the Route 67/Fairgrounds interchange on Oct. 1. Following the ribboncutting was an inaugural drive and performance by the Park Hills High School marching band. The new interchange included constructing the interchange, bridge and ramps. The project is located about two miles south of Route 67/32 interchange at Leadington. The contract was awarded in August of 2006 to Robertson Contractors, Inc. of Poplar Bluff.

Parading the Arrive Alive Message in the Southeast



Members of the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety, along with Team Spirit and Battle of the Belt schools, participated in the Southeast Missouri District Fair and Parade in September. During the parade, over 60 coalition supporters wore their Arrive Alive T-shirts to encourage others to buckle up.

Connections

The mission of *Connections* is to be a monthly source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide. It is distributed to MoDOT employees and retirees.

Community Relations

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Additional copies are available upon request. Suggestions, questions and comments are always welcome.



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Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.



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Return Service Requested

MoDOT Goes Live 24/7

by Jeff Briggs

If a motorist needs to report a pothole, a dead deer in the road, a malfunctioning traffic light, or just has a question about the state's highways, we've always been available during business hours. But sometimes those things happen on nights or weekends, so now MoDOT is ready to handle those questions anytime day or night.

Since September MoDOT's toll-free number, 1-888-ASK-MODOT, has been answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week by a live customer service representative. We're one of the few, if not the only, transportation departments in the country to offer such a high level of service to the public.

"We're very proud to offer this level of response," said MoDOT Director Pete Rahn. "Incidents don't just happen during work hours. Now we're ready to respond with live assistance whenever we're needed."

MoDOT's customer service centers, one in each district, handle all these toll-free calls during workdays. After hours, all calls are routed to Kansas

City or St. Louis. Kansas City handles the northern half of the state (districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5) and St. Louis handles the southern half (districts 6, 7, 8, 9, 10). Routine calls can be forwarded to the appropriate district for response the next business day. For high-priority calls, the Kansas City and St. Louis centers have access to a statewide database of MoDOT crews they can reach for immediate assistance.

"So far 24/7 has been working pretty well," said Tom Grippe, supervisor of the St. Louis customer service center. "People seem to appreciate getting a live person on the phone."

"We used to get about 100 calls a month after hours (in St. Louis)," he said. "In September we handled about 400, so we're definitely helping more people right away. And when they have incidents that need quick attention, we're able to get help out there fast."

"Our customers really like getting a live person, instead of voicemail like they used to," said Kansas City Customer Service Center Supervisor Jackie Davis.



Customer service representatives, like Peggy Jones in District 6, are quick to help MoDOT customers now anytime day or night.

"Sometimes we can answer their questions right away, so they don't have to wait until the next business day."

"As more people learn about this service our call volumes will keep going up," Grippe said. "And we'll really get the calls when winter weather hits!"

MQA Site Visit

Continued from page 1

the examiners all of the things we do to be a quality organization," said Campbell. "In return, their feedback highlights areas where we're doing well and places we can improve. It's not like an audit. They were looking to see what we do right."

Trying to explain to people outside the department what we do in two and a half days was a challenge. Under Organizational Results' guidance, a great deal of people pulled together to facilitate the site visits.

"I think we did a great job of giving the examiners a taste of how we do business at MoDOT in just a few short days," said Director Pete Rahn. "The process will provide us with valuable feedback we can act on. Regardless of the outcome, I believe MoDOT is a winner!"

Organizations that compete for the award are broken down by their size: small, medium and large. We're

competing as a large (more than 500 employees) agency in the manufacturing, service and public sector category. Anywhere from two to six Missouri organizations have been recognized each year since the Excellence in Missouri Foundation began giving the award in 1993.

If we win the award, we join a growing list of outstanding organizations committed to quality, including Sprint, Boeing, Heartland Health, Northwest Missouri State University and SSM Health Care. Only one state agency has won the award - the Department of Revenue in 2000.

"But, it's really not about the award," said Campbell. "It's about how we can improve as an agency."

Still, let's hope as you read this, we've won.

Dignitaries Dedicate New Bond Bridge



U.S. Sen. Christopher S. Bond, Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder, Chief Engineer Kevin Keith, U.S. Rep. Kenny Hulshof and John Held of the Route 19 Missouri River Bridge Transportation Corporation surround Florence Mundwiller-Kelly at the Bond Bridge dedication in Hermann. Florence participated in the ceremony for the first Missouri River bridge in 1930.